



Travis County Fire Marshal's Office

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Avoid life-threatening home heating fires with simple steps

Heating equipment is a leading cause of home fire deaths. Half of home heating equipment fires are reported during the months of December, January and February. With cold weather forecasted this week, the Travis County Fire Marshal's Office recommends these steps to prevent dangerous home heating fires:

- Keep flammable items at least three feet away from heating equipment, such as furnaces, fireplaces, wood stoves or portable space heaters.
- Have a three-foot "kid-free zone" around open fires and space heaters.
- Never use your oven to heat your home.
- Have a qualified professional install stationary space heating equipment, water heaters or central heating equipment according to the local codes and manufacturer's instructions.
- Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional.
- Make sure all fuel-burning equipment is vented to the outside to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Install and maintain carbon monoxide alarms to avoid the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Remember to turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.
- Always use the right kind of fuel, specified by the manufacturer, for fuel-burning space heaters.
- Make sure the fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying into the room.
- Ashes should be cool before putting them in a metal container, and keep the container a safe distance away from your home.
- Test smoke alarms monthly.

For more information, please call the Travis County Fire Marshal's Office at 512-854-4621.

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